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REMARKS

Original claims 1-157 have been cancelled in this response. These claims have been replaced by new claims 158-199, which are consistent with the invention defined in the previously elected claims 44-70, 114-127 and 143-157. No new matter has been introduced in these new claims. No new search is required by the presentation of these new claims. Specifically:

New independent claim 158 corresponds to original claim 55 and is disclosed in paragraph [0144] of the Specification; new dependent claims 159-163 correspond to original claims 78-80 and 95-96 and are disclosed in paragraph [0144] of the Specification; new dependent claims 164-168 correspond to original claims 81-84, 98-102, 115-119, 144-148 and 153-157; new dependent claim 169 corresponds to original claims 66, 77, 78 and 114; new dependent claim 170 corresponds to original claims 86 and 89; new dependent claim 171 is disclosed in paragraph [0145] of the Specification; new dependent claims 172-175 are disclosed in paragraph [0137] of the Specification; new dependent claims 176-177 correspond to original claims 57-58; new dependent claims 178-179 correspond to original claims 62 and 63; new dependent claim 180 corresponds to original claim 64; new dependent claims 181-185 correspond to original claims 35, 36, 45, 46, 49, 50, 60, 61, 66 and 67; new dependent claims 186-192 correspond to original claims 68, 69, 115-119, 124, 144-148 and 153-157; new dependent claim 193 corresponds to original claims 67 and 114 and is disclosed in paragraph [0150] of the Specification; new dependent claim 194 is disclosed in paragraph [0207] of the Specification; and new dependent claims 195-199 correspond to original claims 37, 38, 47, 51, 70, 121-123 and 128 and are disclosed in paragraph [0174] of the Specification.

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Previous Claim Objections:

New claims 158-199 are in full compliance with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c).

Previous Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. §112:

New claims 158-199 are not "indefinite" in that:

- no claim corresponding to original claim 56 is presented;
- new claims 165 and 187 refer to rayon as a "polymer"; and
- no claim depends from itself.

Previous Double Patenting Issue:

There is no "double patenting" issue with the new claims.

New claims 158-199 cover a "nonwoven fabric" not a "laminated" fabric as recited in claim 24 of copending Application Serial No. 10/088,576. Moreover, new claims 158-199 do not mention that the fabric is formed in the pressure lamination apparatus of claim 1 of our copending application as recited in claim 24 of our copending application. Thus, the invention in claim 24 of our copending application is completely different from, and an unobvious improvement over, the invention defined by new claims 158-199.

Previous Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103:

New claims 158-199 are neither taught nor suggested by the prior art of record in this application. Specifically:

Hartstein (US 3,591,434) discloses:

- i) in Figure 1, making a first nonwoven fabric by pressing, with heated rollers (5, 6) a plurality of parallel yarns, extending in a first direction, against the lower side of a heated "self-supporting"

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thermoplastic film; and

ii) in Figure 6, making a second or final nonwoven fabric (shown in Figure 7) by pressing a plurality of parallel yarns extending in a second direction, perpendicular to the first direction, against the upper side of the heated thermoplastic film of the first fabric, between heat seal bars (13,14).

However, the yarns of Hartstein's fabrics are pressed against his thermoplastic film while the film is hot -- and therefore soft and plastic -- and with relatively high pressure. As a result, the upper and lower yarns of Hartstein's fabrics would inevitably become embedded in his thermoplastic film which would adhere to both sides of these yarns -- not substantially only between the upper and lower yarns of the fabric as recited in new claim 158. Moreover, Hartstein's "self-supporting" thermoplastic film undoubtedly weighs at least as much as the yarns in Hartstein's nonwoven fabrics -- not about 5-25% of the weight of his first fabric of upper yarns as recited in new claim 161, nor about 5-20% of the weight of his second fabric of upper and lower yarns as recited in new claim 176; see Figure 1 of Hartstein which shows his thermoplastic film as having about the same thickness as each of his yarns.

Pittman (US 3,753,842), like Hartman, discloses a nonwoven fabric made by adhering overlying warp yarns to weft yarns with an adhesive. However, Pittman's adhesive is applied to his yarns by "dipping" the yarns or fabric in the adhesive or by "padding or spraying" the adhesive on the yarns or fabric to "coat" the yarns; see column 3, lines 2-12 and column 8, lines 2-15 of Pittman. Thus, the yarns of Pittman's fabric would not be adhered by means of an adhesive substantially only between his warp and weft yarns as recited in new claim 158.

Kobayashi (US 4,460,633), like Hartstein and Pittman, discloses a nonwoven fabric made by adhering overlying warp yarns to weft yarns with an adhesive. However, Kobayashi's adhesive is applied by "impregnating" his weft yarns; see column 3, lines 10-12 of

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Kobayashi. Thus, the yarns of Kobayashi's fabric would not be adhered by means of an adhesive substantially only between his warp and weft yarns as recited in new claim 158.

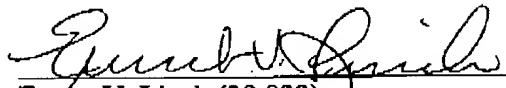
FEE AUTHORIZATION

Please charge all fees (e.g., new claim fees) due in connection with this filing to our Deposit Account – No. 19-0733.

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence was submitted by facsimile in the USPTO on the date shown on Page 1.

Respectfully submitted,


Ernest V. Linek (29,822)
Attorney for Applicant

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